



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AUSTIN DRUG TRAFFICKER SENTENCED TO CLOSE TO 27 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that in Austin, Joe Anthony Molina was sentenced this morning to 322 months in federal prison for drug and firearms violations.

In addition to the prison term, United States District Judge Lee Yeakel ordered that Molina be placed under supervised release for a period of five years after completing his prison term.

On April 12, 2005, Molina pled guilty to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, possession with intent to distribute marijuana, conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute methamphetamine, conspiracy to possess a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

On September 2, 2004, federal and local authorities executed a search warrant at the defendant's Austin home. Authorities recovered over 400 grams of methamphetamine, over 45 pounds of marijuana, scales and other drug paraphernalia. Investigators also recovered an assortment of ammunition, three firearms—two .45 cal. pistols and one SKS rifle—\$12,500 in U.S. currency and three motor vehicles. At sentencing, Judge Yeakel also ordered that Molina forfeit proceeds derived from his drug trafficking activities including his Austin residence, plus the vehicles, firearms, ammunition and the \$12,500 seized by authorities.

This case was investigated by the Austin Police Department, Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Assistant United States Attorney Gerald C. Carruth prosecuted this case on behalf of the government.

The prosecution of this case is another example of how the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas is carrying out the Department of Justice's gun crime initiative - Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide federal initiative designed to reduce gun violence in our communities. PSN promotes partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement to target criminals in possession of guns. Federal law insures that when an armed criminal is arrested, that individual will face swift criminal prosecution and be exiled from the community through the use of stiff mandatory prison sentences.

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